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Media Lines

29 August 1966

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"THE WORKING PRESS", Ruth Adler, ed. 287 pp. Putnam, New York, 1966. \$5.95. -- This is a collection of brief articles, originally prepared for TIMES TALK, the house organ of THE NEW YORK TIMES. It tells how TIMES reporters gather the news, the difficulties they have to overcome and how they perform under emergency conditions (President Kennedy's assassination, Blackout in New York, Sinking of the Andrea Doria, and others). The book conveys a very lively behind-the-scenes picture of how a newspaper of the size, circulation and the financial means of THE NEW YORK TIMES operates. Journalism is practiced differently in other countries and few, if any, foreign papers can afford to send their own reporters (by chartered plane, if necessary) to any part of the world to obtain first-hand coverage of "all the news that's fir to print." Moreover, the articles, though lively and very readable -some dramatic, some informative, a few quite odd --, do not add up to a textbook of journalism: no attempt has been made, to go seriously into the substance of the stories covered or to proceed methodically from local events to national and international policy developments. Nevertheless, editors and other journalists are likely to enjoy this "inside story." (Unclassified)

THIRTY-FIVE MILLION COPIES OF MAO. (Unclassified) According to a recent New China News Agency dispatch, the Chinese government plans to print 35,000,000 sets of "The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung" (four volumes, 1,520 pages, price undisclosed), and to cease printing nearly all other books for the next 17 months in order to accomplish the feat. This is expected to place Selected Works next to the Bible as the all-time best seller. (Of course one wonders how many Chinese will actually read Selected Works.) The recently deposed Vice Minister of Culture, Chou Yang, is reported to have speculated, shortly before his dismissal, that very few Chinese had read Mao's collected works.

Briefly Noted



29 August 1966

Also Symbol Of Despotism

BERLIN WALL MARKED
AS ADMISSION OF COMMUNIST FAILURE

On 13 August the Berlin Wall erected by the Communist East German regime was five years old. Attention is invited to the article on page 13 of the 4 August PRESS COMMENT, "'Crimes' of East Germans Listed" by Harry Ellis of the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. notes that an East German corporal had received from his government a gold watch, cash payment, a special furlough, and a proclamation as a hero for "but a few minutes work," having shot and killed an East German citizen trying to escape to the West.

Another report by Ellis, carried in the 2 August issue of his paper, notes that since the Wall was erected 139 East Germans have been killed attempting to escape: 71 in Berlin and 68 along the East-West German interzonal border. From August 1961 to the end of 1965, Ellis reports, 1,957 East German soldiers and policemen fled to the West. Thus far this year 58 soldiers have crossed the frontier, in addition to a slightly smaller number in the Berlin area.

In a somewhat conflicting report, the N.Y. TIMES on 3 August reported that 58 East Germans have been killed, 54 wounded, and more than 2,200 caught and arrested since the Wall was erected, while 466 East German guards escaped by scaling the Wall.

Whatever the exact figures are -- West Berlin police say it is impossible to establish them -- the Wall today stands as mute testimony to the failure of Communism in East Germany and a continuing example of the Moscow-supported regime's inhumanity and disregard for the legitimate rights and aspirations of the German people. We recall that prior to the erection of the Wall about 3.5 million East Germans chose to leave their homes rather than live under the despotic Ulbricht regime. and we look forward to the day when the East Germans will once again be allowed to express their individual preferences in a free society.



CHINA'S EDUCATIONAL UPHEAVAL	·

SITUATION: On the 13 of June 1966 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee signaled the beginning of a radically new educational system affecting the lives of over a million senior middle school students with this simple announcement:

"In order to carry out the cultural revolution thoroughly and completely reform the educational system, it has been decided to reform the entrance examination methods of higher education institutes and to postpone the 1966 student enrollment program for half a year."

A month later (12 July) more details on the educational reform were published by the <u>People's Daily</u> (Jen-min Jih-pao, the CCP's central organ) in a letter presumably written to order by seven students. The letter was addressed to Chairman MAO and the Central Committee of the CCP and contained additional proposals for educational reform so drastic and far-reaching that, if carried out, they would eradicate from China's schools most subjects and elements which the free world considers indispensable 50X1-HUM for producing intellectually trained and productive citizens.

The only firm steps actually taken at this writing to set the reforms in motion have been the six-month postponement in the enrollment of the 1966 freshmen class at the universities and the retention*of high school and university students at their schools for indoctrination instead of the usual working "vacation." Specifics coming to light on changes in the entrance examination system (in part the reason for the six-month enrollment delay) show them to be rigidly political. At their most extreme the proposed reforms could shelve entrance examinations entirely and select instead new college freshmen on the grounds of their class background and ideological purity. The student of bourgeois background or leaning will presumably be left to fend for himself which may mean - without the necessary party recommendation - that his chances for higher education in China are non-existent.

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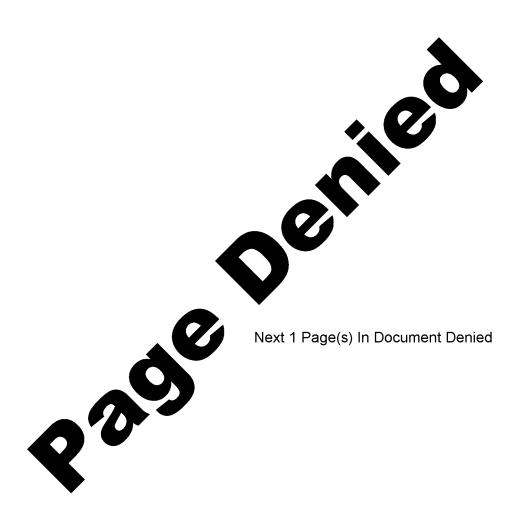
^{*}students have been actually restricted and the university areas closed themselves.

The present system of examinations, although subjected to constant reform since 1949, has remained fairly impartial and has tended to give preference to academic quality over social origin and to knowledge over political leanings. However, after the 1955-57 "reforms" (see unclassified attachment) the percentage of students of bourgeois origin in universities had dropped to 50 per cent by 1959/60 and three years later had dropped to 33 per cent. The newest reforms will open the university doors to students of worker and peasant origin regardless of grades or examination records, or even failure to graduate from high school.

The waiving of high school diplomas or entrance examinations for young peasants, workers and demobilized soldiers has received the most publicity to date, but the other proposed educational reforms, again all attributed to students, are alarming in the extreme. They include recommendations that liberal arts, agricultural and even scientific courses be severely curtailed; that professors hold shorter classes in order to teach twice as many students; that less emphasis be placed on reading books and more on learning through physical labor; that political considerations outweigh academic achievement in giving scholastic marks; and that faculty titles be abandoned as were ranks in the armed forces.

As a grim harbinger of what may be expected in the future the seven letter-writing students accused "certain authorities" (presumably university presidents and faculties) of having thwarted the rise of a second revolutionary generation (modeled on MAO and his Long March companions) and of having created an "abyss" between the proletariat and the academic youth. These accusations appear to be storm signals for increasing criticism and further purges of teachers, professors and school officials despite the 8 August Central Committee directive to party officials to moderate their approach to students and teachers who have so far borne the brunt of the cultural purge. There have already been repercussions at the universities related to the educational reform which are similar to those which cropped out during the 1955 and 1957 reforms ... disorders.





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SOVIET INDUSTRY'S GROWTH RATE CONTINUES TO DECLINE	
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SITUATION: In spite of Soviet expressions of satisfaction with the achievements of the economy during the first half of 1966, recent statistics show that the growth rate of industrial production is still falling. Furthermore, there is no sign that the downward trend of the last 10 years will soon be reversed. Although many reasons for the existence and continuance of this trend can be found, the Soviets can offer no valid excuses for their inability to make adequate progress toward their oft-stated goal of rapid industrial advance.

Brezhnev, speaking at the 23rd Party Congress in March 1966, noted the official disappointment over industrial performance, which had been fore-shadowed in September 1965 in a major speech when Kosygin had pointed to shortcomings in the application of scientific and technical advances to industry and also the outdated management, planning, and incentive in effect in industry. The concern of the Soviet leaders was undoubtedly spurred by the downward course of the rate of industrial growth, which is estimated as follows*:

1951-55: 11% per annum 1956-58: 9 1/2% per annum 1959-61: 8 1/2% per annum

1962-65: less than 7 1/2% per annum

*These growth rates differ from the rates stated by the Soviets because of the flaws in Soviet calculations of what they term "gross industrial production." The Soviets employ a statistical technique which permits double-counting, i.e., the inclusion of both the value of semi-manufactures or intermediate products as such, as well as the total value of the final product which is made of one or more semi-manufactures. For instance, the Soviets count the value of cement as a product of the cement industry, and the total value of concrete structures which again includes the cost of the cement; Western economists place a value only on the finished product. Western economists find that the Soviet method imparts an upward bias of 2% to 3% per annum to the growth rate. Of particular interest in this connection is the reported statement of a prominent

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In the first half of 1966 Soviet industrial production was only about 6%** greater than in the same period of 1965.

The causes of the downturn in Soviet industrial growth are, essentially, continuing inefficiency and the increasing difficulty of finding new ways to stimulate productivity gains. The generally poor planning and the inherently crude, unresponsive management of the Soviet economy -- notably the investment program -- are widely recognized by Soviets and foreign observers. Other influences have included: waning opportunities to "borrow" Western-developed technology; a decline in the previously high rate of growth of the general level of education; agricultural shortfalls which limited the supply of goods to the food and consumer goods industries: the shortening of the work week from 46 to 41 hours in the late 1950's: increased production of machinery for military and space programs; disappointing results from the operation of new industrial plants.

All this has resulted in a sharp drop in the rate of increase in the productivity of labor and capital. The estimated growth trends in the combined index of the productivity of these two factors of production are***:

1951-55: 4.5% per annum 1956-58: 5.7% per annum 1959-61: 5.4% per annum 1962-63: 2.2% per annum 1964-65: 1.1% per annum

Soviet leaders and economists have long been aware of the need to take decisive steps to arrest the downturn and restore the pace of industrial development to that of the late 1950's.

^{* (}Cont.) Soviet economist, A.G. Aganbegyan, that Western economists, and specifically CIA analysts, possess better data on the USSR than do Soviet economists.

^{**} Adjusted from the Soviets' announced figure of 8 percent for the increase in gross industrial production. This 8 percent figure can be compared directly with an increase of 9.3 percent in the first half of 1965 over the first half of 1964.

^{***} These estimates have been painstakingly arrived at by competent Western economists who apply methodology worked out by, among others, E.F. Denison.

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Towards this end Kosygin, at the CPSU's Central Committee Plenum in September 1965, proposed a series of reforms in economic organization which would lead away from tight central direction of the economy and toward a market socialism (featured, i.a., by realistic prices and the allowance of greater play of the forces of supply and demand). Whereas it is still too early to make a firm judgment of the effectiveness of the measures taken soffar, it is nevertheless clear to well-informed Western economists that the initial steps have been too timid and inadequate to accomplish the stated purposes.

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